

Second, I will introduce legislation to extend and expand the Indian Reservation Roads Program, which is so important to Indian communities in New Mexico. This program provides direct funding to tribes in 33 states to improve transportation. My bill increase the annual funding for tribal roads from \$275 million to \$500 million, reestablishes a separate \$15 million per-year program to repair bridges on tribal lands, and dedicates \$20 million per year in new Federal funding for tribal transit projects.

Third, I will introduce legislation to establish a new University Technology Center at New Mexico State University in collaboration with the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University. The focus of the new center is on nondestructive methods to measure the wear and tear on highway bridges.

Fourth, I will reintroduce a bill to designate US Highway 54 between El Paso, Texas, and Wichita, Kansas, as the SPIRIT High Priority Corridor on the national highway system. In New Mexico, the route runs for about 350 miles from the southern border with Texas, through Alamogordo, Carrizozo, Vaughn, Santa Rosa, and Tucumcari, to Nara Visa. This designation will help focus attention on the need to upgrade this heavily traveled highway to four lanes. The bill was cosponsored last year by Senators ROBERTS, INHOFE, HUTCHISON, and DOMENICI.

Fifth, I will introduce legislation to reauthorize the special funding that goes directly to San Juan and McKinley Counties in New Mexico, as well as neighboring counties in Arizona and Utah, to help maintain roads used by school buses on the Navajo Reservation. In TEA-21, Congress provided \$1.5 million per year for 6 years to counties in the three States to help ensure that buses carrying children to school have passable roads. It is not acceptable when Indian children can't attend school simply because their school buses couldn't get through on the many poor quality roads in the region.

Sixth, I will reintroduce my bill to authorize Los Alamos National Laboratory to continue its advanced computer-modeling project to develop the National Transportation Modeling and Analysis Program, or NATMAP. The program will provide a valuable tool for analyzing the national transportation system, including cars, trucks, railroads, barges and airplanes, as a single integrated system. The program will also be valuable in assessing the impacts of disruptions to any portion of the transportation network.

I hope each of these bills will gain bipartisan support and will be included in the comprehensive 6-year reauthorization bill. I will have more to say about each of these six initiatives over the next few weeks as the bills are introduced.

Finally, one of the other important parts of the transportation bill is the authorization of funding for individual high-priority highway and transit

projects around the State. In 1998, I helped secure funding for a number of highway projects throughout New Mexico, including upgrades of highways 84/285 and 70, Unser Boulevard, Paseo del Norte, and the uptown and northwest areas of Albuquerque and Rio Rancho.

This year, some of the projects for which I intend to pursue funding include reconstruction of the access road from Interstate 40 to the Double Eagle II airport in anticipation of the relocation of Eclipse Aviation; construction of a new Paseo del Volcán on the northwest side of Albuquerque and Rio Rancho; reconstruction of the I-40 and Coors Boulevard interchange; construction of a new interchange on Interstate 25 to serve Mesa del Sol; and expansion of the I-25 interchange in Belen.

In the rural areas of New Mexico, I will be seeking Federal funding to complete four-lane upgrades of the Ports-to-Plains corridor along US 64/87 between Clayton and Raton, US 54 from Tularosa to Nara Visa, US 62/180 south of Carlsbad, and US 666 south of Shiprock.

For transit projects, one of my priorities will be an authorization for the design and construction of a high-capacity transit corridor in Albuquerque. This effort was first initiated in 1998. The project has now been through the required preliminary studies and is ready to move forward with preliminary design for either a light-rail system or a system with dedicated bus lanes. In addition, I will be seeking an authorization to continue efforts to preserve the Santa Fe El Dorado rail line as a possible commuter route.

In addition to funding for my priority highway and transit projects, a large number of additional projects will be funded directly by the State and local governments with formula grants funds provided under the 6-year transportation bill.

I know reauthorizing the transportation bill is a massive effort. A number of committees here in the Senate will be involved, including the Finance Committee where I am a member. I look forward to working this year with the Environment and Public Works Committee, including Chairman INHOFE and Senator JEFFORDS, on the highway programs in the bill, and with the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, including Chairman SHELBY and Senator SARBANES, on the transit portion of this important legislation. I do believe that reauthorization of the transportation bill is critical to the citizens of New Mexico and to the Nation. I hope we can complete a bipartisan bill this year in a timely manner.

PROMOTING DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, included in the omnibus bill is a provision I authored permitting the use of fiscal year 2003 foreign operations funds to support the advancement of

democracy and human rights in Iran. While I believe that Iran rightly belongs in the Axis of Evil, I also recognize that the people of Iran, those residing in the country and abroad, are growing increasingly weary of the repression imposed upon them by Iran's ruling clerics.

We all know how these clerics came to power, and today, many Americans appreciate the demographic changes underway in that country. To put it simply, with each new birth in Iran, the popularity and control of the regime is further undermined. An estimated 50 percent of Iran's 70 million people were born after our compatriots were held hostage for 444 days. The call of the clerics is falling on increasingly deaf ears, and Iran's youth are already in the streets demanding good governance, accountability, and economic opportunity from Iranian hardliners.

The ingredients for political and economic change in Iran already exist. Our task must be to consider how best to support these efforts. I propose worthwhile endeavors include funding for Iranian newscasts, publication of Iranian political journals, development of websites, and dissemination of information on democracy, the concepts of nonviolent struggle, and secularism.

As I am familiar with democracy programs that have been implemented in other parts of the world, including the former Yugoslavia and Burma, I am well aware of the challenges posed in funding democracy and human rights programs in Iran. But I am confident that it can be done.

I will have more to say on this topic at a later date, but I appreciate the attention of my colleagues on this important issue.

Let me close by thanking Jennifer Chartrand for her five years of service with the Foreign Operations Subcommittee. Jennifer left earlier this year to work with the Defense Subcommittee, and she will be missed. In addition to managing her accounts in a professional and effective manner, Jennifer deserves special recognition for helping the people of Burma in their struggle for democracy and human rights. As this is a cause close to my heart, I am particularly grateful for all her hard work on this issue. I wish Jennifer all the best in her new position, and I look forward to continue to work with her in her new capacity.

A CENTENNIAL SALUTE TO THE SALT RIVER PROJECT

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, as this Congress deals with the large and complex challenges facing our Nation in the 21st century, we do well to remember local histories and the great public endeavors of our people that have helped make America great.

In my home State of Arizona, we remember and celebrate the vision and commitment that, 100 years ago on February 7, launched an organization that helped a great metropolis bloom in the desert.